



OLDER AMERICANS
Substance Abuse & Mental Health
Technical Assistance Center

FALL 2005

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eCommunication

In collaboration with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, the Older Americans Substance Abuse and Mental Health Technical Assistance Center staff is pleased to share the first issue of our *eCommunication*. Started in October 2004, the Center is a first-time effort of its kind, allowing us to work closely with those in the field invested in older adult issues; researchers working on cutting-edge topics; and State/community planners prioritizing the needs of “baby boomers” and older adults.



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Over the past year, we have engaged in the process of identifying needed Center resources, developing foundational documents, including bibliographies, and networking with stakeholders in a variety of roles throughout the country. As you will read about in the *eCommunication*, partnerships with the U.S. Administration on Aging, the National Council on the Aging, and our own Expert Panel, comprised of individuals with a range of expertise on aging issues, including the consumer perspective, serve as the founda-

tion for the work we plan to do over the next few years. Our initial Expert Panel Meeting was held on March 29, 2005, and provided us with strong direction for the Center’s activities. Supporting science-to-service efforts, with the Center serving as a bridge between SAMHSA’s National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices and successful programs in the field, is a priority for us. We have many exciting activities coming up over the next year and look forward to receiving your feedback and ideas.

The mission of the **Older Americans Substance Abuse and Mental Health Technical Assistance Center** is to enhance the quality of life of older adults by providing training and technical assistance to health care agencies and providers regarding health issues common in late life. Center priorities include the prevention and early intervention of substance abuse, medication misuse and abuse, mental health disorders, and co-occurring disorders.



Notable Events

Rural Cultural Competence Conference

The West Virginia University Center on Aging and the Mountain State Geriatric Education Center hosted the dynamic *Rural Cultural Competence Conference* on May 25-27, 2005, in Morgantown, West Virginia. The conference focused on how traditions and beliefs passed down through generations influence the decisions rural elders make about their health and healthcare practice. Presentation topics included the needs and characteristics of rural elders, the meaning of health among rural older adults, considerations for culturally

competent health care communication, and health care literacy. Displays of indigenous crafts, art, culture and literary works highlighted the conference theme.

The White House Conference on Aging (WHCoA) Solutions Forum on Rural Aging served as an informative pre-conference event. Members of the WHCoA Policy Committee heard from a panel of experts, government officials and leaders from organizations that provide services to the elderly in West Virginia and around the nation about issues and potential



solutions impacting the lives of elders in rural areas.

The Older Americans Substance Abuse and Mental Health Technical Assistance Center exhibited and distributed information about the Center during the course of the three-day conference.

Get Connected! Toolkit Training

AMHSA's *Older Americans Substance Abuse and Mental Health Technical Assistance Center* is pleased to have the opportunity to partner with the National Council on the Aging (NCOA) in providing the *Get Connected! Toolkit* training, which is offered to aging services providers. On June 7, 2005, Dianne McElroy, the Older Americans Substance Abuse and Mental

Health Technical Assistance Center's project manager attended a training conducted by Alixe McNeill, Vice President, NCOA. The training prepares those interested in assisting aging services providers in how to use the toolkit to promote aging network partnerships to address medication, alcohol, and mental health problems in older adults. Ms. McNeill and Ms. McElroy look forward to joining forces to



deliver the important messages of the *Get Connected! Toolkit* to older adults throughout the nation.



The Older Americans Substance Abuse and Mental Health Technical Assistance Center boasts a group of individuals with a wide range of backgrounds and expertise that complement the Center's mission. SAMHSA would like to acknowledge the many people who are involved with the Technical Assistance Center. The Center staff would especially like to recognize the contributions of the Center's Expert Panel Members. Thanks to all of those who participated in the Expert Panel Meeting held on March 29, 2005. Their contributions and ideas were key in helping to shape the Center's goals and serve as a guide for this and subsequent years.

Expert Panel Meeting Attendees

Nancy Bohman – San Antonio Fighting Back

Carol Colleran – Hanley Center

Carol D'Agostino – Lifespan of Greater Rochester, Inc.

Larry Dupree – Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute

Jim Firman – National Council on the Aging

Turner Goins – West Virginia University

Kevin Ann Huckshorn – National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors

Julie Jensen – The Washington Institute

Christopher A. Langston – John A. Hartford Foundation, Inc.

David Oslin – University of Pennsylvania

Louise Quijano – Baylor College of Medicine

John Shipherd – New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services

FEDERAL PARTICIPANTS

Gayathri Dowling – National Institute on Drug Abuse

Catherine Gordon – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Mary Guthrie – US Administration on Aging

Denise Juliano-Bult – National Institute of Mental Health

Marcia Scott – National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism



STAFF

Older Americans Substance Abuse & Mental Health Technical Assistance Center

Frederic Blow, Co-Scientific Director, is the nation's foremost expert in substance use disorders in older persons. Dr. Blow holds a PhD from Pennsylvania State University and is based at the University of Michigan.

Stephen Bartels, Co-Scientific Director, is a national leader in the field of geriatric substance abuse and mental health treatment. Dr. Bartels holds an MD from the University of Virginia and is based at Dartmouth University.

Lisa Patton, Project Director for Westat, has an extensive background both as a researcher as well as a clinician. Dr. Patton holds a PhD from the University of Maryland. She serves as the lead Westat representative on the project.

Dianne McElroy, Project Manager for Westat, has 20 years of combined experience in research, social marketing, and direct service provision. Dianne holds an MA from University of Maryland, Baltimore County. She is currently leading the effort with NCOA to provide national trainings for the *Get Connected!* Toolkit.

David Snipes, Project Analyst for Westat, has nearly 10 years of clinical and research experience. Dave holds an MS from Johns Hopkins University. He is heading the Center's efforts to support NREPP's review process.

Josh Noda, Project Analyst for Westat, has a wide range of experience that will complement the Center's efforts. Josh holds an MPP from Georgetown University. He is assisting in the NREPP process in addition to various other tasks.

Aricca Van Citters, Research Associate with Dr. Bartels, has six years of experience conducting research in the field of geriatric mental illness. She holds an MS from the Center for Evaluative Clinical Sciences at Dartmouth College.

Laurie Brockmann, Research Associate with Dr. Blow, has research expertise in geriatric substance abuse prevention, mental health services, alcohol screening and brief interventions, and serious mental illness. She holds an MPH and MSW from the University of Michigan.

Kerry Crawford, Research Assistant for Westat, is experienced with providing technical assistance to the states and territories, and will assist with a range of project-related tasks. She holds a BS from Towson University and is pursuing an MPH at George Washington University.

Federal Oversight

Jennifer Solomon, Public Health Advisor for SAMHSA, is a policy lead in developing substance abuse prevention programs for older adults. Ms. Solomon holds an MA from the University of Maryland, and she serves as the Task Order Officer for the project.

Lisa Park, Public Health Analyst in SAMHSA's Office of Policy, Planning and Budget, is the lead staff support for older adult and rural health issues. Ms. Park holds an MSW from the University of Pennsylvania and she serves as the Alternate Task Order Officer for this project.



Introducing the Scientific Co-Directors



Stephen J. Bartels, MD, MS is Professor of Psychiatry at Dartmouth

Medical School and Director of Aging Services Research at the New Hampshire-Dartmouth Psychiatric Research Center. Dr. Bartels is also the Medical Director for the Division of Behavioral Health and the Director of the Behavioral Health Policy Institute for the State of New Hampshire. Dr. Bartels is the recipient of a 5-year career award from the National Institute

of Mental Health (NIMH) on mental health services research. He has conducted research on a variety of topics, including evidence-based practices, prevention of alcohol and medication misuse, dual diagnosis, integration of mental health services and primary care, health care and rehabilitation for older adults with serious mental illness, Medicaid and Medicare costs of mental health services for older adults, and quality of mental health services in long-term care.

Dr. Bartels is a Past President of the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry and served as the

Founding Chair of the Geriatric Mental Health Foundation. He served as the expert consultant to the Older Adult Subcommittee of the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health. Dr. Bartels was selected as the recipient of the Health Services Research Senior Career Award by the American Psychiatric Association in 2003, and received the Mental Health and Aging Award by the American Society on Aging in 2005. He is the Scientific Co-Director for the Older Americans Substance Abuse and Mental Health Technical Assistance Center.



Frederic C. Blow, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor and Research Associate

Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Michigan and is Director of the National Serious Mental Illness Treatment Research and Evaluation Center (SMITREC) for the Department of Veterans Affairs, Ann Arbor, MI. His areas of research expertise include alcohol screening and diagnosis for older adults, serious mental illness and concurrent substance abuse, alcohol brief interventions in healthcare settings, substance

abuse prevention, and mental health services research.

Dr. Blow has been the principal investigator on numerous federal, state and foundation grants and has published extensively in the areas of substance abuse and alcoholism among the elderly, substance abuse screening/treatment and mental health. From 1996-98, Dr. Blow was Panel Chair for CSAT's (Center for Substance Abuse Treatment) TIP (Treatment Improvement Protocol) on Substance Abuse Among Older Adults. Additionally, he is the first Huss/Hazelden Research Chair for the Butler Center for Research at the Hazelden Treatment Center

located in Center City, Minnesota. Dr. Blow maintains an active role in both graduate and undergraduate teaching and the mentoring of pre- and post-doctoral students and junior faculty.

Dr. Blow serves as Scientific Co-Director for the Technical Assistance Center. Along with Dr. Bartels, he provides expert direction and guidance to the Center in all activities related to the development and dissemination of materials, information, resources and technical assistance related to the prevention and early intervention of substance abuse, medication misuse and abuse, mental health disorders, and co-occurring disorders.



Featured Program

The Gatekeeper Program

The Gatekeeper model seeks at-risk older adults who typically do not come to the attention of the formal mental health, substance abuse, and aging service delivery systems. This volunteer program was developed in 1978 by the late Raymond Raschko, MSW, at Elder Services Mental Health, Spokane, Washington. The program recruits and trains community businesses and organizations to identify high-risk older adults who may be exhibiting signs and symptoms that indicate they need assistance. Gatekeepers may include meter readers, bank tellers, postal carriers, first responders, utility workers and many others. Following a referral, a geriatric mental health specialist makes a home visit to conduct a comprehensive assessment and evaluation.

We want others to know about your program! We invite you to submit information regarding the special work that your program is doing. Please send us the following: name of program, location, contact person and contact information, and a 50-word summary highlighting the program's mission and achievements!

Appropriate linkages are made to mental health, substance abuse, aging, medical, and other social services. Research has shown the Gatekeeper model to be an effective outreach model for identifying socially isolated older adults who show signs of psychiatric symptoms.

For more information on this program, please contact:

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News from our Federal Partners



Jennifer Solomon

The Older Americans Substance Abuse and Mental Health Technical Assistance Center is a vital resource for the substance abuse, mental health, and gerontology fields. It is important not to underestimate the dangers of medication misuse, alcohol abuse, and mental issues which affect older Americans in every community. By working with health and social services providers, states and communities, this Center will provide support in-state planning and promote evidence-based practices to strengthen systems and create, enhance, and share quality programs across the nation.

Jennifer Solomon is a Public Health Advisor in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), Division of State and Community Assistance (DSCA). She serves as the Task Order Officer for the Older Americans Substance Abuse and Mental Health Technical Assistance Center. Ms. Solomon received her master's degree in Applied Sociology with a special emphasis in Sociology of Aging, and a Graduate Certificate in Gerontology from the University of Maryland in 1997.

We will introduce our Alternate Task Order Officer in our next issue, Winter 2006.



Calendar

September 2005

7th Annual Indian Elders Conference

Oklahoma City, OK
September 7-9
Marca Davis,
Project Coordinator
405-744-7511
marca.davis@okstate.edu

The Golden Years and Domestic Abuse Conference

Greenville, NC
September 8-9
Sara Munzer,
Conference Coordinator
252-758-4400
smunzer@pittfvp.org

20th Annual Co-Occurring Disorders Conference: Changing Systems, Changing Lives

Wenatchee, WA
September 12-13
877-301-4557
DASATraining@dshs.wa.gov

East Coast Autumn Series on Aging

Philadelphia, PA
September 12-15
[http://www.asaging.org/
autumn_2Dseries/as05/index.cfm](http://www.asaging.org/autumn_2Dseries/as05/index.cfm)

Washington/Oregon State Pilot Test

September 14
Washington State
888-281-8010
[OlderAmericansTAC@
Westat.com](mailto:OlderAmericansTAC@Westat.com)

Health Empowerment for Baby Boomers & Beyond

Austin, TX
September 23-24
[http://swaustin.org/Library/pdf/
Confschedule.pdf](http://swaustin.org/Library/pdf/Confschedule.pdf)

West Coast Autumn Series on Aging

San Francisco, CA
September 26-29
[http://www.asaging.org/autumn_
2Dseries/as05/index.cfm](http://www.asaging.org/autumn_2Dseries/as05/index.cfm)

October 2005

Ethical Issues in Workforce Development for an Aging Society

Oklahoma City, OK
October 14
Marca Davis,
Project Coordinator
405-744-7511
marca.davis@okstate.edu

3rd National Prevention Summit, Innovations in Community Prevention

October 24-25
Washington, DC
[http://www.healthierus.gov/
steps/summit.html](http://www.healthierus.gov/steps/summit.html)



November 2005

2005 International Council on Active Aging and the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging Annual Meeting

“Quality Through Community”
San Antonio, TX
November 7-10
<http://am2005.expoexchange.com/>

58th Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America

New Orleans, LA
November 18-22
[http://www.eshow2000.com/
geron/about_the_meeting.cfm](http://www.eshow2000.com/geron/about_the_meeting.cfm)



Contact Us!

For more information regarding any of the topics in this issue or other questions and comments, please contact:

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